

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 13198

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E.O.11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PFOR US VN

SUBJ: VIETNAM TALKS: MIA'S AND FAMILY REUNIFICATION

REF: PARIS 12934

1. SIEVERTS HAD SECOND SEPARATE TALK WITH MIA SPECIALIST VU HOANG, FOLLOWING UP ON POINTS NOTED REFTEL, AND RAISING SUBJECT OF FAMILY REUNIONS IN VIEW OF HOANG'S CAPACITY AS DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS OF THE VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

2. ELUCIDATING PHAN HIEN'S OBSERVATION THAT "DOZENS" OF GRAVES HAD BEEN EXCAVATED IN FRUITLESS SEARCH EFFORTS, HOANG SAID THIS APPLIED IN PARTICULAR CASE OF MAJOR EATON, WHOSE REMAINS HAD BEEN CONFUSED WITH THOSE OF A VIETNAMESE. EATON'S REMAINS REPORTEDLY HAD BEEN BURIED AT A SITE NOW USED FOR A SWEDISH POTTERY FACTORY. A TREE MARKING THE GRAVE AND A GRAVEMARKER HAD BOTH DISAPPEARED, BUT LOCAL PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY KNEW WHERE THE GRAVE WAS. HOANG SAID THE LOCAL PEOPLE WERE QUITE CERTAIN THEY HAD FOUND EATON'S REMAINS, AND HAD REJECTED OUR FINDING THEY WERE VIETNAMESE. SIEVERTS RESPONDED IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 PARIS 13198 041943Z

GET US AND VIETNAMESE EXPERTS TOGETHER TO SETTLE THIS QUESTION. HOANG AGREED.

3. HOANG ALSO ECHOED PHAN HIEN'S POINT, RESTRESSED IN TODAY'S MEETING, THAT THE COOPERATION OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE WOULD BE ENHANCED IF THE US CONTRIBUTED MEANINGFULLY TO HEALING THE WOUNDS OF WAR IN VIETNAM.

4. HOANG SAID HE HAD ALREADY CABLED THE FURTHER SIEVERTS LETTER AND MIA DOSSIERS TO HANOI AND HAD INSTRUCTED HIS STAFF TO SEEK ANSWERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID THE DETAILED MAPS WITH THE DOSSIERS WERE USEFUL AND ASKED THESE BE SENT WITH EACH CASE.

5. ON FAMILY REUNIONS, VU HOANG ACKNOWLEDGED ROLE OF RED CROSS AND UNHCR, BUT STATED THEIR ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE ONLY TEMPORARY, "SINCE THIS SUBJECT COULD BE BETTER HANDLED BY EMBASSIES IN HANOI AND WASHINGTON." IN THE MEANWHILE, HE SAID THE RED CROSS SHOULD CONTINUE TO SERVE AS A CHANNEL.

6. HOANG SAID FAMILIES IN VIETNAM WISHING TO BE REUNITED WITH RELATIVES IN THE US SHOULD APPLY TO THE EMIGRATION OFFICE IN SAIGON OR HANOI, WITH ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS. RELATIVES IN THE US COULD MAIL DOCUMENTS (E.G. MARRIAGE AND BIRTH CERTIFICATES) TO THEIR RELATIVES FOR THIS PURPOSE. HOANG NOTED THAT INTERNATIONAL MAIL MOVES FREELY, BUT THAT DOCUMENTS COULD ALSO BE PASSED THROUGH RED CROSS.

7. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF US AND VIETNAMESE CITIZENSHIP LAWS, AND HOANG ASKED FOR A COPY OF THE US LAW FOR HIS INFORMATION. SIEVERTS SAID ESSENTIAL POINT WAS REUNIFICATION OF DIVIDED FAMILIES, AND THAT US LAW OFFERED SEVERAL OPTIONS UNDER WHICH RELATIVES MIGHT QUALIFY. HE STRESSED THAT US CONSIDERS CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PARIS 13198 041943Z

THIS A HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM.
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